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Approved For Release 2002/10/17 : CIA-RDP74B00681R000100230002-5

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Adm - 13.1 MFR
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DD/ST# 2394-71

2 August 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT: Public Understanding of the Role of
Intelligence

A. Inventory of Current Activity:

S&T Directorate contacts with the public and private sectors for the most part are based on contractual relationships with the business world. The understanding of CIA's role is certainly increased within these institutions by the fact of the relationship, the nature of the work contracted for and the calibre of the Agency's direction and administration of the specific project involved. Obviously some are better than others, but the overall impression from our viewpoint would be categorized as at least favorable. We presently

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A secondary relationship is maintained by use of outside membership on panels involved in giving the Directorate and its individual Offices advice, counsel and direction. The attached chart shows a total of 41 such individuals who are intimately acquainted with at least some aspects of this Directorate's work. Our personal judgment is that they are quite favorably disposed to the concept of intelligence. Remuneration is either nonexistent or minimal; and while their security clearances are of some personal benefit, most of them--particularly the 11 academics--would not serve if they did not believe in the cause. These men represent a formidable collection of recognized accomplishment in their respective fields, and the weight of their influence is far greater than their total number (41) might suggest.

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There is an additional area of contact through our external training program. We generally have about four officers involved in full time graduate work in reputable academic institutions.

Lastly many of our scientific and technical officers are members of professional Societies and Organizations (132 individuals in 118 organizations). The extent to which they actively espouse the Agency in such a medium is in the absence of instructions a matter of personal predilection.

B. Suggestions:

1. If we are to embark on any kind of a program to improve the CIA's public visage we must first recognize that this means someone must speak out. The implications of encouraging such publicity must be accepted--a one-time release of an estimate on Soviet Economics or a DCI interview in a weekly news magazine tend to become happenstance with little effect on the consistently hostile majority of media output. A simple reference to Pearl Harbor no longer is adequate to explain the existence of the CIA today.

2. Premise: There should be no better champion of the CIA than an employee who understands it, believes in it, and takes pride in it.

3. There are better than staff employees who are overt in the sense their annual W-2 forms state CIA as the employer. They should be able to speak out openly for the CIA.

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4. Judging by the daily cross section of the press put out by the Special Assistant's shop, most by far of the scurrilous information published by the media is either factually in error or mere supposition based on a suspicious if not hostile attitude toward the concept of a CIA.

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5. The "public" has in general little direct contact with government employees and particularly CIA personnel. The "business" segment of the public is generally sympathetic to the need for a CIA. The "intellectual" world--academia and the arts--is potentially if not in fact generally hostile. The media are generally oversuspicious if not critical and at least half the time inaccurate. Much of the rest don't give a damn.

6. We can have a significantly greater impact on the hostile segments through an adequately prepared group of overt employees. To effect this, these people need deeper training in the machinery of the National security framework of the U.S. Government and the administration of the CIA. They also need timely, factual information on fast-breaking situations in the news which involve the CIA in at least a potentially unfriendly manner--i.e. the Green Beret case, CIA as a transporter of narcotics. They would benefit by some historical background and advice in past cases such as the Bay of Pigs, Guatemala, the National Student Association etc. Certainly some important successes--the Cuban Missile Crisis, the tamping effect of National Estimates on defense spending would be an addition. Most importantly they need to be encouraged to speak up. Using such knowledge, if only socially, would have a positive effect. A start along such lines could be made with a pilot group rather than a grandiose training program.

SIGNED

Donald H. Steininger
Acting Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology

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